

EXTENSIONS OF REMARKS

ST. MARK AME CHURCH CELEBRATES 133 YEARS OF SERVICE IN THE MILWAUKEE COMMUNITY

HON. GERALD D. KLECZKA

OF WISCONSIN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, April 24, 2002

Mr. KLECZKA. Mr. Speaker, on April 26, 2002 St. Mark African Methodist Episcopal (A.M.E.) Church will celebrate its 133rd anniversary in Milwaukee, Wisconsin. In 1869, a time when African American's made up less than 1 percent of the city of Milwaukee's population, St. Mark A.M.E. Church was founded in a former site of a German Congregation. Although no longer at that location today, St. Mark is one of the oldest, largest and most influential congregations in Milwaukee.

The A.M.E. Church in the United States was founded out of the Methodist tradition but with its roots in the segregationist attitudes of that period in our history. In 1787, a group of slaves and former slaves in the Philadelphia area withdrew from St. George's Methodist Episcopal Church when they were not permitted to sit with the congregation, but were forced to sit separately in the gallery. They formed their own church, the African Methodist Episcopal (A.M.E.) Church, and committed themselves to living the gospel and adopted the motto of "God Our Father, Christ Our Redeemer, Man Our Brother." After its founding, the A.M.E. church spread quickly throughout the Northern states, and eventually moved into the South after the Civil War.

Eighty-two years after the A.M.E. church's founding in the United States, a group of African American activists came together in Milwaukee, to establish St. Mark. Several of St. Mark founding members had a positive and permanent impact on the African-American Community in Milwaukee and Wisconsin. Mr. Ezekiel Gillespie, a former slave from Georgia who served as chairman of the group that founded St. Mark in 1869, filed a historic lawsuit that eventually led to full suffrage for African-Americans in Wisconsin. The Reverend Eugene Thompson, a former pastor at St. Mark, was one of the founding board members of Columbia Building, which in 1924 began helping African-Americans buy homes in the Milwaukee area.

This history of living one's faith through activism provides the foundation for a legacy of service to the community. Current initiatives and ministries at St. Mark are operated through the Lovell Johnson Quality of Life Center, and include counseling for alcohol and drug abuse; assistance with economic development, education and employment opportunities, as well as environmental preservation. The church also created the Anvil Housing Corporation and was the first African-American congregation in Wisconsin to sponsor senior citizen and disabled housing. St. Mark also fosters public service and patriotism in its youngest members through its sponsorship of Boy Scout and Girl Scout troops.

So it is with great pride that I congratulate the congregation of St. Mark A.M.E. Church and its Pastor, Reverend Michael A. Cousin, on 133 years of giving glory to God by living the gospel and serving our community.

RECOGNIZING THE IMPORTANCE OF RESTORING FOOD STAMPS ELIGIBILITY FOR LEGAL PERMANENT RESIDENTS

HON. CHARLES B. RANGEL

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, April 24, 2002

Mr. RANGEL. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the importance of restoring food stamps eligibility to legal permanent residents. In 1996, Congress stripped legal immigrants of eligibility for food stamps and a variety of other benefits. As a step in the right direction, President Bush proposed to restore food stamps benefits to low income legal immigrants. The President's position on this issue makes sense. The food stamps program is a critical safety net that allows working men and women to feed their families during hard times. All a household needs to qualify is a low income. However, thousands of legal resident families go hungry each day.

Legal residents pay taxes and their labor helps drive the economy. Yet, even hard working families may have a difficult time putting food on the table. A recent study by the Urban Institute found that 36 percent of New York City's limited English Proficiency households, during the previous year, had been unable to acquire adequate food at one time or the other. Food stamps can help provide these needy families with a temporary safety net during difficult times. Hunger does not limit itself to U.S. citizenship. Therefore, we should not create a policy to systematically deny food to needy tax paying immigrants in this country.

But when the conferees to the Farm Bill met last week, Republicans did just that. They crafted a food stamp provision that essentially denies benefits to legal permanent residents of the United States, even though this position is in direct opposition to the President's proposal of restoring food stamps to low income immigrants who lived in the U.S. for at least five years. The Republican's food stamp proposal is much more restrictive and would severely limit legal resident's eligibility and basically punish them for being non-citizens. It is unfortunate that the President's own party is undermining a bi-partisan efforts to help feed the working poor.

Recently, Republicans fashioned themselves as being pro-Hispanics. At the same time the Republicans were courting the Hispanic vote, they were cutting assistance that would help needy working legal immigrant families put food on the table. Democrats have fought for equal rights and just treatment for immigrants, as well as for restoring benefits to immigrants workers. If Republicans were really

concerned about the immigrant community, they would restore food stamps eligibility for legal permanent residents.

HONORING RABBI ISRAEL ZOBERMAN

HON. EDWARD L. SCHROCK

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, April 24, 2002

Mr. SCHROCK. Mr. Speaker, it is with great pleasure that I rise today to honor Rabbi Israel Zoberman, spiritual leader of Congregation Beth Chaverim in Virginia Beach. He is also the President of the Hampton Roads Board of Rabbis, and Chairman of the Community Relations Council of the United Jewish Federation of Tidewater. I would like to share the following article that was written by Rabbi Zoberman and appeared in the Virginian-Pilot on April 12, 2002.

AN OPEN LETTER TO CHAIRMAN ARAFAT ON THE OCCASION OF ISRAEL'S 54TH ANNIVERSARY

Your present living accommodations are a far cry from a past of world capitals hopping. However, you are reliving the "glorious" 1982 days in Lebanon under siege by the same Sharon encircling you again. In truth, you are both caged in as long as there is no peace for your respective peoples.

You itched to duel again (for the last time?) with your old nemesis, otherwise how explain the Second Intifada following Sharon's visit to the Temple Mount. You trapped each other; he aroused you enough for a pretext of rash action, yet you catapulted him to become a Prime Minister! Soon you may have the time to check out for yourself the over 800 references to Jerusalem in the Hebrew Bible, but why doesn't your Koran mention it even once?

I wanted to believe that you transformed yourself from the terrorist you were—a freedom fighter to you—to a statesman representing a long-enduring people abused as a pawn by its Arab brethren. Your partner to the sacred opportunity and responsibility was an Israel weary of wars imposed upon it, yearning for normalcy and that elusive peace it has sought all along. When entering into official peace with Egypt, entailing painful compromises, it was Sharon as Defense Minister who dismantled the Israeli town of Yonit. I resisted those doubtful of your famous handshake's sincerity with martyred Rabin—it cost him his life—when signing the 1993 Oslo Accords on that beautiful day at the White House, facing a breathless world celebrating a hopeful beginning. Remember the reward of a Nobel Peace Prize? How have you fallen, Ya Raes.

Of course, the murder of your friend Rabin by a Jewish zealot profoundly affected you for you were justly proud of "the peace of the brave" with your "brother" Rabin. Then came vicious terrorist attacks on Israelis by Muslim extremists who opposed your peace, and Israel's political power in the only Middle East democracy shifted to the Right. Netanyahu, the victor with an American accent, claimed you were not sincere (were you?) and that Israel risked too much. He

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